

CONSCIOUSNESS AND VOLITION

13

and manner of life of different kinds of living creatures manifests a corresponding diversity of instinctive promptings. The workings of *directive* instinct exhibit extreme variety, although they are generally uniform throughout the individuals of a species. The similarity of blackbirds' or of chaffinches' nests is a familiar illustration. But each of the principal *impulsive* instincts of mankind can be followed down the animal kingdom by traces which, coming to the surface here and there, appear to witness to an underlying uniformity—a continuity in germ if not in development—which acknowledges the fundamental relationship of all living creatures.

Consciousness and Volition.—In the strongest contrast to instinct stand the faculties of consciousness and volition. To an organism whose behaviour is directed by instinct, it means nothing that an experience is new, or is familiar; it learns nothing, and has no need of learning. Consciousness and volition, on the contrary, are essentially means of drawing profit from experience: they may mislead us, whereas instinct is infallible within its own province: but error is an incident of liberty, and these faculties, in their fullest development, open to man possibilities of freedom which the directing force of instinct would have kept closed against him. In the uniformity of instinct we may see a reflection

tion of the continuity of Life.
Consciousness and
volition emphasize. on the other hand.
Life is individuality : they could scarcely have been
developed had not Life been broken up into
separate parcels
—had it not been divided. that is to
say. between
a number of different individual
beings. The
forces of gravity, of electricity, are
ubiquitous.
there is no spot on the earth but
is subject to